



Gedney Hill CoE Primary  
and Shepeau Stow Primary  
Schools Federation

## English Policy

We believe that our English curriculum prepares all children to lead an enriched, fulfilling life by teaching the skills they need to communicate effectively and confidently with others, using the spoken and written word. Our children will be given opportunities to develop their use, knowledge and understanding of spoken and written English within a broad and balanced curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught English skills. We aim to promote a life-long love of reading which develops their cultural, emotional and intellectual awareness so they can participate fully in the world around them.

### Aims

For all of our children to:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding;
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information;
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language;
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage;
- value language from other countries and cultures;
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences;
- use questioning and discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas;
- be competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

Year 6 children from our Federation will leave us:

- reading and writing with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to take responsibility for their own learning including self-monitoring and correcting their own errors; • with a love of reading and a desire to read for enjoyment;
- with an interest in words and their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in relation to grammatical terminology;
- understanding a range of text types, media types and genres;
- able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation;
- writing in a neat and cursive style;
- using their developing creativity, imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness;
- having a suitable technical vocabulary to respectfully articulate their responses in any discussion.

## **Statutory Requirements**

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: English Programmes of Study – Key Stages 1 and 2 (2014) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017). These documents are the foundation to our planning and progression mapping.

### **Approaches to Speaking and Listening**

We recognise the importance of spoken language in children's development across the whole curriculum; spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

We aim for children to be able to speak clearly, fluently and coherently, to be able to listen attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy and contribute to group discussions effectively.

We achieve this by:

- giving our children confidence in themselves as speakers and listeners by showing them that we value their conversations and opinions. We also encourage a respect for the views of others;
- being aware that as adults, we provide a model of speakers and listeners in our day-to-day interactions with them and with other adults in our school
- helping them to articulate their ideas and provide purposes and audiences for talk within a range of formal and informal situations where the children's efforts and skills are acknowledged by staff, parents, carers, visitors and peers:
  - \* talk partners
  - \* collaborative work
  - \* storytelling
  - \* roleplay, hot-seating and drama
  - \* debating within lessons across the curriculum
  - \* assemblies including Nativity and Harvest Festival
  - \* School Council representation
  - \* An annual whole Federation production.
  - \* by developing the children's ability to listen with attention and understanding in all areas of the curriculum, asking and responding to questions appropriately.

Children who require extra support in speaking and listening are referred to a speech and language therapist to further assess their needs.

We recognise the need for all children to speak, read and write standard English fluently and accurately, while acknowledging that a pupil's own dialect or other language is of prime importance. All staff members are role models who promote Standard English and take care to sensitively correct children's misconceptions with language.

## **Approaches to Phonics**

Provision is made each day in discrete Read, Write Inc sessions and the teaching of phonic skills is embedded within English teaching in each class. These comprise of learning different graphemes, focussing on oral and aural phonological skills and sight vocabulary. (Refer to the Federation Early Years Reading Progression), During these sessions, children are also explicitly shown how to apply their developing skills to their writing. All children are grouped in accordance to their individual needs and are in 'set' appropriate groups. In

Reception, children share opportunities to develop their communication, language and English skills on a daily basis in both adult-led and child-initiated activities.

### **Approaches to Reading**

We use high quality fiction and non-fiction books and texts both within guided reading, story time and across the curriculum to engender a love of reading and encourage our children to read widely, frequently and with enthusiasm. Teachers and teaching assistants model reading strategies during shared reading, whilst children have the opportunity to develop their own reading strategies and to discuss texts in detail during guided reading and guided comprehension sessions. Carefully planned questioning is used to promote in-depth discussions and understanding across of the reading domains. Questions progress from literal, through deduction to inferential; with the greater emphasis on inference in upper key stage 2. (Refer to the Federation Reading Progression Mapping)

The Oxford Owl Reading Scheme is used in Reception, Key Stage 1 and Lower Key Stage 2. The children take home a banded book which is appropriate to their level of ability plus a library or 'challenge' book to share at home. Once the children become 'free-readers' they are able to read any book from their classroom or school library. Class teachers are responsible for keeping a record of children's reading.

Many exciting and rewarding activities are arranged across the Federation to promote the pleasure and knowledge that can be gained from books:

- Daily class story time
- Involvement in 'World Book Day'
- 'Book Fortnight' in the Summer Term where the whole Federation immerses in one book across all year groups.
- Author visits
- Blast off for Reading (linked to book reviews)
- Book Fair
- Friday Library Time where Year 6 children read to Reception and Key Stage 1 children

### **Approaches to Grammar and Spelling**

Grammar skills are taught both discretely in English lessons and embedded through cross curricular activities. The teaching of grammar and spelling is in line with the requirements of The National Curriculum (2014). Our expectations for grammar are included in:

- the Federation's 'Sentence and Grammar Progression Grid';
- the Federation Writing Assessment and Progression Document;
- the Federation Medium Term Plan and English Genre Features document.

These documents detail the expectations for the teaching of grammar and the terminology (from the NC glossary) which must be used by each year group. They offer a guide for identifying the key objectives and skills which must be taught each year.

To be able to spell correctly is an essential life skill. When spelling becomes automatic, children are able to concentrate on the crafting of content and the making of meaning; confidence in spelling can have a profound and positive effect on the writer's creativity. We aim to use explicit, interactive teaching. The Federation follows the 'Read, Write, Inc: Spelling' programme which enables the children to recap on the previous year's spelling patterns; introduces new patterns and sight words; and draws children's attention to the origins, structure and meaning of words. This programme is in line with the National Curriculum for spelling.

Approaches to Writing

We aim to develop the children's ability to produce well structured, detailed writing for purpose which makes

meaning clear and engages the interest of the reader. Our approach to teaching writing covers the 'transcription' and 'composition' requirements of The National Curriculum (2014).

To develop our children as writers:

- We provide experiences where the children can acquire confidence and a positive attitude to writing.
  - \* Teachers model writing skills, teaching children how to compose, amend and revise their writing.
- Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals.
- Children develop and sustain writing skills through opportunities to write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- Children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions at the end of a unit; applying their taught skills in an unsupported piece of writing.
- Children are taught to become critical readers of their own, and others', writing by using self-evaluation and peer-evaluation to check and edit their work independently for sense, accuracy and meaning.

## **Handwriting**

Handwriting begins in the E.Y.F.S. with mark-making and patterns. All pupils are given access to a wide range of writing tools and mediums to practise the early fine motor skills. The needs of left-handed children, or those with physical difficulties are also taken into consideration and where necessary accommodated with resources or specific intervention.

Pupils are encouraged to develop fluent lines of correctly orientated letters from an early age and emergent writing is encouraged. We believe that discrete handwriting sessions, where children's formation and pencil grip can be readily overseen, should take place at least once a week. Correct posture and positioning of paper or books are also emphasised during these sessions. Letter formation and handwriting is taught in line with the Federation Handwriting Policy.

## **Planning and Resources**

We use the National Curriculum (2014) to inform our planning and as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English. In accordance with the planning procedures, English is planned both discretely and as a vehicle for learning in other areas e.g. the teaching of non-chronological reports for use in history. The National Curriculum for English objectives encompasses the breadth of what is taught and informs the content of all Federation Planning, Progression and Assessment Documents.

## **Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)**

Daily English lessons are inclusive to children with special educational needs and disabilities. Where required, children's Active Learning Mats and Class Provision Mapping will incorporate suitable objectives from the National Curriculum for English and teachers keep these in mind when planning work. These targets may be worked upon within the lesson as well as on a small group or 1:1 basis outside the English lesson.

Writing and reading focused intervention across the Federation helps children with gaps in their learning and understanding. These are delivered by trained support staff and overseen by the class teacher and/or the SENCo and Assistant to the SENCo. Within the daily English lesson teachers have a responsibility to not only provide differentiated activities to support children with SEND but also activities that provide sufficient challenge for children who are high achievers. It is the teachers' responsibility to ensure that all children are challenged at a level appropriate to their ability.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Positive attitudes towards reading and writing are encouraged, so that all children, regardless of race,

gender, ability or special needs, including those for whom English is a second language, develop an enjoyment and confidence with English. This policy is in line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy. The aim is to ensure that everyone makes progress and gains positively from lessons and to plan inclusive lessons.

### **Parental Involvement**

We see parents as vital partners in the process of developing children's English skills.

- They have an important influence on children's language before they come to school.
- They provide valuable support at home in helping children to become readers and writers.
- They offer a useful audience for children in their development as speakers and listeners, readers and writers as the children move through the Federation (e.g. phonics, spelling, reading)
- We aim to foster a strong home-school partnership regarding reading, using Federation Reading Diaries as a tool for communication between school and home.

We encourage parents to play their full part in their children's education by:

- Involving parents in the school's reading programme from the moment their child starts school.
- Give parents termly outlines of the curriculum areas in English that each year group will be studying.
- Welcoming offers of help from parents to assist in school by listening to children read.
- Sending homework home in accordance with the Federation's Homework Policy and encouraging parental support.

### **Role of the English Lead**

- To lead in the development of English throughout the Federation.
- To monitor the planning, teaching and learning of English throughout the Federation.
- To help raise standards in English.
- To provide teachers with support in the teaching of English.
- To work alongside the SLT to provide staff with CPD opportunities in relation to English within the confines of the budget and the School Improvement Plan.
- To monitor and maintain high quality resources.
- To keep up to date with new developments in the area of English.

### **Related documents and policies:**

- Medium Term Plan and English Genre Features document
- Writing Assessment and Progression Document
- Sentence and Grammar Progression Grid
- Grammar Progression with Examples
- EYFS Reading Progression • EYFS Writing Progression
- Handwriting
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- Marking and Feedback

**Review:** September 2025